Amendments to the Claims:

A clean version of the entire set of pending claims, including amendments to the claims, is submitted herewith per 37 CFR 1.121(c)(3). This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for open circuit voltage regulation for an electronic ballast, the method comprising:

providing a regulating pulse width modulator having an output voltage threshold limit ~~250~~;

sensing an output voltage from the electronic ballast to generate a sensed output voltage signal ~~252~~;

comparing the sensed output voltage signal to the output voltage threshold limit ~~254~~; and

limiting the output voltage when the sensed output voltage signal exceeds the output voltage threshold limit ~~256~~ by limiting a pulse width of pulses output from the regulating pulse width modulator.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein ~~the~~ sensing the output voltage from the electronic ballast to generate ~~a~~ the sensed output voltage signal ~~252~~ comprises sensing a tank current in the electronic ballast.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3 wherein ~~the~~ sensing the tank current comprises sensing a voltage across a resistance between a resonant capacitor and a common rail.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein ~~the~~ sensing the output voltage from the electronic ballast to generate ~~a~~ the sensed output voltage signal ~~252~~ comprises sensing the output voltage directly.

6. (Currently Amended) A system for open circuit voltage regulation for an electronic ballast, the system comprising:

pulse width modulating means for modulating a pulse width of pulses, said pulse width modulation means having an output voltage threshold limit;

means for sensing an output voltage from the electronic ballast to generate a sensed output voltage signal;

means for comparing the sensed output voltage signal to the output voltage threshold limit; and

means for limiting the output voltage when the sensed output voltage signal exceeds the output voltage threshold limit by limiting the pulse width of the pulses.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 6 wherein the means for sensing the output voltage from the electronic ballast to generate ~~a~~ the sensed output voltage signal comprises means for sensing a tank current in the electronic ballast.

9. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 8 wherein the means for sensing the tank current comprises means for sensing a voltage across a resistance between a resonant capacitor and a common rail.

10. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 6 wherein the means for sensing the output voltage from the electronic ballast to generate ~~a~~ the sensed output voltage signal comprises means for sensing the output voltage directly.

11. (Currently Amended) An open circuit voltage regulation circuit for an electronic ballast, the regulation circuit comprising:

an filament current sensing circuit ~~224~~ operably connected to an output of the electronic ballast and generating a sensed output voltage signal; and

a regulating pulse width modulator ~~U3~~ receiving the sensed output voltage signal and operably connected to control a voltage at the output of the electronic ballast, the regulating pulse width modulator ~~U3~~ having an output voltage threshold limit;

wherein the regulating pulse width modulator ~~U3~~ limits the voltage at the output of the electronic ballast when the sensed output voltage signal exceeds the output voltage threshold limit by limiting a pulse width of pulses output from the regulating pulse width modulator.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) The circuit of claim [[10]]11 wherein the filament current sensing circuit ~~224~~ is responsive to a tank current in the electronic ballast.

14. (Currently Amended) The circuit of claim [[10]]11 further comprising a tank circuit operably connected to the output of the electronic ballast and having a resonant capacitor, and the filament current sensing circuit ~~224~~ comprises a resistance between the resonant capacitor and a common rail.

15. (Currently Amended) The circuit of claim 14 wherein the regulating pulse width modulator ~~U3~~ has a set trip level for the output voltage threshold limit and the resistance is sized so that the sensed output voltage signal exceeds the set trip level when the electronic ballast has an open circuit.

16. (Currently Amended) The circuit of claim [[10]]11 further comprising a high voltage driver ~~U4~~ operably connected to be driven by the regulating pulse width

modulator ~~U3~~, and the regulating pulse width modulator ~~U3~~ limits the voltage at the output of the electronic ballast by driving the high voltage driver ~~U4~~ at a limited pulse width.

17. (Currently Amended) The circuit of claim [[10]]11 further comprising a tank circuit operably connected to the output of the electronic ballast and having a resonant capacitor, and the filament current sensing circuit ~~224~~ is operably connected between the resonant capacitor and a common rail.

18. (Currently Amended) The circuit of claim 17 wherein the filament current sensing circuit ~~224~~ is selected from the group consisting of a resistive voltage divider, a voltage stepdown transformer, and a current transformer.